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BC-COUP-PROFILE 6 PARIS

FIRST INDICATIONS THAT PRESIDENT BOKASSA HAD BEEN PROMOTED TO THE MILITARY RANK OF MARSHAL IN 1974, WAS CONTEMPLATING A CHANGE OF TITLE IN JUNE 1975 WHEN A FRENCH JEWELLER REVEALED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED AN ORDER FOR AN IMPERIAL CROWN.

IN SEPTEMBER, HE RENOUNCED ALL HIS MINISTERIAL POSITIONS. AT ONE TIME, HE HEADED 14 OF HIS COUNTRY'S 16 MINISTRIES.

ON DECEMBER 4, AN OFFICIAL DECREE CHANGED THE NAME OF THE COUNTRY TO THE CENTRAL AFRICAN EMPIRE WITH EMPEROR BOKASSA I AT THE HEAD OF ITS THREE MILLION CITIZENS.

SHORTLY AFTERWARDS, PHOTOGRAPHS WERE RELEASED OF CENTRAL AFRICANS BOWING BEFORE THE ENTHRONED EMPEROR HOLDING THE IMPERIAL MACE IN HIS LAP.

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REVIEWED BY RCSDATE 10/2/72RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATATS AUTH. DIA ()ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☒RELEASE DENIED ☐PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

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MOST OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHS -- PRINTED AND DEVELOPED BY HIMSELF -- SHOWED HIM IN MARSHAL'S UNIFORM WITH SEVEN GOLD STARS.

SOME OF HIS MANY MEDALS WERE WON DURING WORLD WAR II AND LATER WITH THE FRENCH ARMY IN INDOCHINA. HE HELD AT LEAST EIGHT CENTRAL AFRICAN DECORATIONS, BESIDES MANY DECORATIONS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES.

BOKASSA WAS ALSO A MUSIC LOVER. AN OFFICIAL BIOGRAPHY RECORDED THAT HE "DIRECTS THE TRAINING OF BANDS AND THE COMPOSITION OF MUSIC IN HIS COUNTRY."

ONE OF HIS FIRST ACTS ON TAKING OVER POWER IN 1966 WAS TO BREAK RELATIONS WITH CHINA, SAYING HE HAD EVIDENCE OF A PLOT TO DISBAND THE REGULAR ARMY AND EXECUTE ITS LEADERS.

PEKING DENIED INVOLVEMENT IN ANY PLOT AND DECLARED THE MOVE WAS "UNJUSTIFIABLE."

THE TWO COUNTRIES LATER REPAIRED THE BREACH AND BOKASSA WAS AN HONORED GUEST THERE IN 1976.

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